

# ALLEGED 200 IN CITY TAKE OATH NOT TO FIGHT FOR U. S.

## The Weather Report

For Bridgeport and vicinity: Fair and continued cold tonight; Saturday increasing cloudiness and slightly warmer.

# The Bridgeport Times

and Evening Farmer

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## The Kaiser's Reply

His Majesty's letter to the Kaiser advocates his throne in favor of the Hun Terror. Read the latter's reply on Page 5.

PRICE TWO CENTS

# WOMEN MOB FUEL OFFICE FOR COAL; SALTS MILLS UNABLE TO OPERATE; AGENT GOES WEST TO SEEK AID

## MEMBERS OF WORKERS' 'SICK BENEFIT SOCIETY' PLEDGED TO RESISTANCE

Department of Justice Investigating Organization Believed Teutonic in Nature, Following Discovery Made Through Draft Questionnaire—Subscribers Agree Not to Join Forces of America or Any Other Country—Federal Agent Raids Headquarters in Fairfield Ave.

If the citizens of Bridgeport were told that two companies of the famous Brandenburg Guards, of the Kaiser's army, were stationed in Bridgeport, they would be surprised. Yet according to facts unearthed this morning by the officials of the Department of Justice, who are investigating the activities of the Workers' Sick and Death Benefit Society, such a state of affairs apparently exists, and we have over two hundred servants of the Wilhelmstrasse in our midst.

The members of this organization, according to the admission of Otto Volger, bartender in the Adams House, which has clubrooms at 319 Fairfield avenue, take an oath upon joining which reads "Will you pledge yourself not to join the regular United States army or navy, or army or navy of any other country, state militia or police force in any form?" Charles H. Lane, agent of the Department of Justice, raided the headquarters of this society, this afternoon, seeking literature and other evidence to be examined and used according to the nature of the evidence collected.

At the Federal building, nothing would be said as to the nature of the evidence collected. The Workers' Sick and Death Benefit Fund has branches in 13 cities in this state and the membership of each branch runs all the way from 40 to 50 to several hundred. The big majority of the members are Teutonic or of Teutonic extraction. A large number of the members are American born and there are a number of nationalities besides German and Austrian, but the latter predominate and the heads are said to be Potsdamers of the most dangerous type.

The organization has been in existence 10 years or more and has a membership of 100,000 in this country. It publishes a paper called "The Solidarity," printed in New York, containing a directory of the various branches, classified by states, names of the officers, news articles and editorials printed in German and English.

Beside the seditious oath which members are compelled to make, one of the strictest oaths is absolute unity between all members by always observing the rule never to bring charges against the society or individual members in public or through newspapers.

Whether Washington was aware of activities of this society or not, is not known at the present time, but the literature has been distributed through the country through the mails and it was a surprise to the local officials when the filing out of a questionnaire disclosed the real nature of the society.

Officials of the society deny the charges strongly, but it is believed that the Department of Justice would not have acted so quickly and effectively if it had not in its possession sufficient reason for taking the drastic action they did.

The branches of the society in Connecticut are in New Haven, Nor-

(Continued on Page 3.)

**KALKERT SAYS HE WAS ASSAULTED**

On his way home from work, at 5 o'clock last evening, Edward Kalkert, of 303 Maplewood avenue, a machinist employed at the Bullard plant, stopped in at a Fairfield avenue saloon for a drink.

Two hours later he was found lying on the walk at South avenue and Water streets, bleeding from numerous cuts, his eyes blackened and his body covered with bruises. He was taken to the emergency hospital for treatment, and there said that he had been assaulted and robbed by unknown persons, of \$70 in cash, a gold watch and chain, ring, pin, eye-glasses and other valuables. The matter is being investigated by the police.

## 20 PER CENT BOOST FOR CITY TAXES

By placing a front-foot valuation upon all property within the city limits, the city administration plans to keep the tax rate within distance of the 21 mill mark by boosting the grand list from \$168,000,000 to near the two hundred million mark. With the total requisitions of municipal departments in the neighborhood of \$5,500,000, they must be slashed enormously by the Board of Apportionment to get the rate as low as 22 mills, which is 13 mills higher than the rate on the 1916 list.

In addition to the enormous additional expenditures levied by the administration in the last few weeks, including the salary grab, the two-platoon system for the fire department, and the creation of several city offices, the city has also to pay bond interests, primarily for warrents, to the extent of several hundred thousand dollars.

The Board of Relief faces a record breaking session. The tax commissioner has boosted centrally located property to more than \$3,000 a front foot, while the residential districts will suffer accordingly.

When the grand list is completed and a definite figure presented to the Board of Apportionment and City Auditor Keating, it will show an amount approximately \$40,000,000 in excess of New Haven, the next largest city, or an increase of \$3,000,000 since Bridgeport's 1916 grand list.

## BROOKLAWN CLUB WILL SAVE FUEL

Desirous of conforming to the express wish of Coal Administrator Carl F. Siemon, that fuel be conserved wherever possible, the Brooklawn Country club announced today that the dinner dance and program of moving pictures scheduled for tomorrow night will be cancelled.

About 1000 soldiers guarded the district while aiding in the fire fighting. Civilians were called on for patrol duty. A munition factory in the vicinity was not touched by the flames. Several firemen, overcome by cold, exhaustion and smoke, were removed to hospitals.

At the request of war department authorities in New York the police there sent fireboats which reached Hoboken after cutting their way through the Hudson river ice.

Two Thousand Cossacks Killed When Exploding Munitions Wreck Train

Stockholm, Jan. 4—A Haparanda dispatch says the munition depot on the Russian southwestern front was blown up recently and that all buildings within a radius of two kilometres were destroyed. Two trains loaded with Cossacks on the way to the Don district were wrecked, causing the death of 2,000 men.

## 2 CHILDREN DIE; MOTHER IN HOSPITAL

Zela and Louisa Tibador, aged 9 and 11 years, respectively, are dead, and their mother, Mrs. Zela Tibador, of 33 Ebbett's Lane, is in a dying condition at the Bridgeport hospital today, as the result of a gas leak from a broken fixture in their home.

The three were found lying in bed, unconscious, by a neighbor, about 12:30 o'clock this noon, and the emergency hospital was notified. Dr. J. F. Keegan immediately responded, and arriving, found the younger child, Zela, dead.

The second girl still had a spark of life left in her, but efforts to revive her were fruitless, and she died while on the way to the Bridgeport hospital, in the ambulance. Mrs. Tibador's condition is extremely dangerous, and she is not expected to live.

According to report, the gas pipe in their room was broken, and a rag was twisted about the opening to prevent the escape of gas. Failing to see the children out in the street as usual this morning, the neighbor who found them broke into their house to investigate, with results as stated.

## SAVE MUNITIONS SHIPS ANCHORED NEAR GREAT FIRE

Hoboken N. J., Jan. 4—Firemen, United States soldiers and civilians, aided by New York fireboats and railroad tugs, brought a stubborn blaze under control after a fight of several hours in the heart of the industrial section paralleling the government controlled water front here today. Ships loading war supplies were threatened.

A six-story manufacturing plant, containing paper and other mill supplies owned by the Gatti-McQuade Co., was destroyed with an estimated property loss of \$250,000. Numerous small fires, caused by sparks carried by a 40-mile wind, were checked by the soldiers and civilians, while the firemen, almost exhausted by their efforts at a blaze elsewhere earlier in the morning and handicapped by weak water pressure, fought the flames in the Gatti-McQuade building.

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## U. S. MAIL CARRIER ON SKIS

Harbor Is Frozen for Stretch of 90 Miles—Towing Company Boats Out of Commission—Shipping Completely Tied-Up.

With Bridgeport harbor so completely frozen that mail is being delivered by sleigh to the Lighthouse, and the weather bureau forecasting continued cold tonight and little hope of any great rise in temperature in the near future, the outlook is not promising for activities along the water front to resume their normal state.

All of the tugs of the Bridgeport Towing Co. were out of commission today as a result of trying to break the ice for the past forty-eight hours and a hurry call was sent out for steel shoes to fasten on the bows of the boats to prevent them being smashed any further.

It was reported by the captain of the S. S. Seaboard of the Bridgeport and New York line that the Sound was frozen from Whitestone to the Connecticut shore a distance of close to ninety miles and that the big boats which ply regularly on the Sound are locked tight at their docks at Fort Schuyler. It took the Seaboard twelve hours to reach her dock upon arrival here.

Harbor Master Lamond received word that two big Standard Oil Co. tugs are on their way here with a large consignment of oil which will relieve the threatened famine in lubricants. The heavy steel barges will arrive here this afternoon and advance will be taken at the time of their arrival to widen the channel which they will break through the ice and keep it open so that coal barges can be brought in.

Harbor Master Lamond will try to use the Standard Oil boats to relieve the ice bound situation in Bridgeport harbor and has every confidence that by tomorrow morning the harbor traffic will be in a fair way to be resumed.

After fighting every inch of the way up the ice choked Sound the steamer Naugatuck came into Bridgeport harbor at 10:45 o'clock last night, hours late. In some places the ice was over eight inches thick and it was almost impossible to drive the bow of the boat through it. Captain Hancock who was in command has been making trips up and down the Sound for many years and, in his opinion, it was the hardest trip he ever made. The Naugatuck left for New York this morning as usual.

The temperature at seven o'clock this morning registered three degrees below zero which makes the sixth time that the mercury has gone below zero in a week and the weather bureau in Washington gives but slight hope for any relief. The forecast, however, says that there is a rise of temperature in the northwest and that the last wave of coming east, but when it is due in this section is not stated.

Conditions along the water front are but very little worse than they are in the city proper. Lawyers and others who were obliged to be in the county court house suffered from the cold in a most acute manner. Courts were held with every one wearing their overcoats and business was practically suspended.

Edward Chadwick, the building superintendent, exhausted his efforts to obtain coal, and finally decided to use what little he had in coming east, but when it is due in this section is not stated.

There was not a single boiler of the set in the building which showed any pressure today. All the pipes emptied of water and no attempt will be made to utilize the majority of rooms in the building again until a sufficient supply of fuel is on hand.

## SCION OF WEALTHY FREEZES

Wrapped In Blankets Frozen to Her Body Mrs. Harriet Ward is Found in Her Fashionable Home After Four Days Without Food.

Wrapped in blankets and comfortables which had frozen stiff about her frail body, suffering from cold and hunger, and enjoying only the companionship of a little Japanese terrier, Mrs. Harriet Montgomery Ward, was rescued from death.

The scion of one of the oldest and finest families in Connecticut, and at one time a woman of considerable wealth, was removed to Hillside Home by local charities officials yesterday afternoon, when she was found virtually at the point of death, huddled in a chair in which she had sat without food or warmth for the past four days, in the flooded, frozen kitchen of her handsome residence at 539 Huntington Road.

Left in a decidedly weakened condition by the combined effects of her harrowing experience and her advanced age, Mrs. Ward responded but slightly to the treatment administered to her at the poor house, and is today in a serious state, though expected to recover. She will remain at the institution until relatives have made provision for her comfort.

Although she bore signs of intense suffering, Mrs. Ward retained all her former spirit and pride when Pharmacist Alexander MacPherson, of the emergency hospital staff, called at her home to take her to Hill Side, and objected strenuously to going to the poor-house. After an hour's argument, however, she was persuaded to change her mind, and when she was assured that her dog, "Toto," a valiant little animal, would be well cared for during her absence, she quite willingly consented to go. MacPherson was compelled literally to carry her to the ambulance, her own tottering limbs refusing to support her slight weight.

Evidence came to light after Mrs. Ward had gone to Hill Side, to show that she had been sitting alone in her frozen, cheerless kitchen for at least four days, and that during all that time she had not touched food to her lips. The conditions found by Pharmacist MacPherson in her home were pitiful in the extreme. The house is a substantial, well-built structure, equipped with a costly steam-heating plant, but this was not in operation. The boiler in the heating system had burst, as had pipes and radiators, and these were coated with ice. The room in which Mrs. Ward was found, and part of the water was flooded, and part of the water was frozen. There was no fire in a kitchen range nor in a gas stove. Not a bite of food was to be found.

There was coal a plenty in the cellar bins, but the heating plant was not running because it needed repair, and the plumber summoned some time ago had not called to do the work. Furthermore, Mrs. Ward's housekeeper, a woman who had lived with her for some time, quit her employment about two weeks ago, leaving her aged mistress to shift for herself when last week's severe cold wave came on.

A neighbor yesterday discovered Mrs. Ward's plight, and after giving her as much food as she thought would be safe after so long a period of hunger, notified the charities department of the unfortunate woman's predicament, with results as described above.

Mrs. Ward's career has within the past several years not been without misfortune. Before her marriage she was a New Haven girl, Harriet Montgomery Axtwater, daughter of a well-to-do merchant and financier, who, in his day, was president of two of the largest banks in the Elm city.

Miss Axtwater was noted for her charm and beauty, and was courted (Continued on Page 3)

## TROLLEY SERVICE MAY BE HALTED

Textile Plant Lays Off 500 Men This Morning, Being Unable to Run Several of Its Departments Owing to Shortage—Hysterical Women Rush Police.

Bridgeport today finds itself face to face with a fuel shortage which threatens the foundations of its industrial and economic life. With no relief visible to members of the local fuel committee, scores of factories are threatened with closing. The Salts Textile Mills today suspended 500 men, being unable to operate several of the departments of the mills.

The anthracite shortage, affecting the city at a time when it is experiencing a cold wave of record breaking length and bitterness, is causing intense suffering throughout the city. This morning hundreds of hysterical women, mobbed the local fuel offices.

Three policemen were swept aside and the frantic housewives pleading and threatening, demanded that they be given fuel or the death of their children would result. Few of the requests could be granted and the women were forced to leave the office unable to get fuel.

The city's bakeries are threatened with being compelled to suspend operations; the Connecticut Co. is reported to have about exhausted its supply; Siemon promised 50 barges of coal, has given up faith in the federal pledges of aid and has sent W. F. Severn, of the A. W. Burritt Lumber Co. to Detroit to investigate the pooling system in vogue in that city. It will be applied to Bridgeport and it is hoped will assist in solving both the household and factory supply conditions.

The suffering of families has been further increased by their inability to even purchase kerosene with which to fill the small stoves procured by the hundreds from local stores. Gas heaters in many homes were today out of commission, the fluid having frozen in the pipes.

The meagre coal supply for homes in possession of local dealers has dwindled until the bins are empty and the fuel committee this morning was forced to reduce its allotments from one-half a ton to one-quarter of a ton for each customer. The 30 licensed street peddlers were today cut off entirely, leaving the local fuel office the only headquarters where the suffering might apply for relief.

(Continued on Page 3.)

## ENTENTE ALLIES LIKELY TO GIVE RECOGNITION TO BOLSHEVIK GOVERNMENT

London, Jan. 4—Developments in the Russo-German negotiations, the Daily Chronicle says, are likely to cause the western power to give de facto recognition to the Lenin government in Russia. A statement of Entente allied policy of a democratic character, it adds, soon will be sent to Russia.

M. Litvinoff, who has been appointed ambassador to London by the Bolsheviks, the Daily Chronicle continues, may receive de facto recognition as ambassador while Sir George Buchanan, the British ambassador to Russia, who is reported on his way home, may be replaced by a diplomat in sympathy with the ideas of revolutionary Russia.

The statements apparently are based on a contribution by "a diplomatic correspondent." The writer says that owing to the Bolshevik discovery of German duplicity anything may happen.

"There are," he says, "three courses: The Bolsheviks may give way, the Germans may give way, or there will be a rupture of relations. The first is hardly likely in view of Foreign Minister Trotsky's declaration. The second is possible, for the Germans are past masters in the art of specious compromise. But the third is most probable, since the Bolsheviks have exhibited a perspicacity which was hardly expected in this country.

"Russia, the land of boundless sur-

prises, may quite possibly witness a revival of war, if not in the most active form it might at least be a sullenly defensive war necessitating the keeping on the frontier of a considerable German force. It would at least prevent those pleasant and profitable commercial exchanges which Germany hopes for.

"Assuming such a situation and the consolidation of Bolshevik power, provided failure to extract a peace does not wreck the Lenin regime, then recognition of that power as a de facto government follows. Since that is so, a Socialist would be a logical representative of that government and Maxim Litvinoff, who has been appointed, is a likely enough occupant of the embassy."

Referring to the retirement of Sir George W. Buchanan, the British ambassador to Russia, whose services are praised highly, the writer says: "In his place probably would be sent a diplomat in marked sympathy with the ideas of revolutionary Russia."

"Be that as it may, we may expect soon some new statement of policy with regard to Russia, which, should it lean toward the latest developments and democracy, would undoubtedly strengthen the Allied cause in Russia."

The Bolsheviks have fixed the opening of the constitutional assembly for Jan. 15, provided there is present at that time a quorum of 400 members.